Ahata Kidara, Sadar Bazar, Delhi treating them at par with non-refugees during this year;

whether it is also a fact that some MPs also brought such facts to his notice during the last three months; and

if so, what are the details of such compIaints and action proposed to be taken to give relief to these refugees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) Some representations have been received through MPs alleging assessment of incorrt-ct damages but DDA has denied that assessment of damages in respect of the refugees of Ahata Kidara, Sadar Bazar, Delhi, who are covered by Gadgil Assurance, has been done' in-corrPCtly treating them at par with refugees. Assessment of damages the nature of quasi-judicial pro-ceedings under the public Premises (Evction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act and the parties can go in appeal to Session Court in ease they feel aggrieved.

Atrocities on Harijans in Uttar Pradesh

3364. SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA: Will the Minister of WEL-FARE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware about the recent atrocities committed on Harijans in village Abhaypur near Murad Nagar of district Meerut (U.P.);

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government have taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) to (c) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on tha Table of the House.

Increase in the number of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers

3365. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a.) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase in the number of marginal farmers and agircultural labourers in the country during the last 3 years;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor, and

(c) what steps have been taken to arrest this trend?

THE MINISTER- OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAMANAND YADAV); (a) Statistics on the number of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers in the country during the last 3 years is not available. However, the Ave yearly agri-cultural census of operational holdings and decennial population census do indicate an increase.

(b) The possible reasons for increase in the above two categories could, among others, be attributed to fragmentation of holdings due to increase in population and partition in the family, acquisition of land particularly for major projects, poverty, inadequate allotment of land under land distribution programmes to the landless poor etc.

(c) While steps taken to check **the** growth of population may also have the effect of restricting the extent of fragmentation of holdings, vairous poverty alleviation programmes including distribution of land to landless rural poor are being executed with a view to ameliorate the economic conditions of marginal farmers and agricultural labourers.